

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPALITY
COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
FEBRUARY 17, 2026

The Council Work Session of Tuesday, February 17, 2026 was called to order by Council President, Rashaad Bates, at 6:30 PM in Municipal Hall Chambers, 235 East Airy Street, Norristown, PA.

There was a Moment of Silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The following Council members were in attendance:

William McCoy
Mydera Robinson
Natalie Colson
Jasmine Griffen
David McMahan
Dustin Queenan
Rashaad Bates

Also in attendance were:

Leonard Lightner, Municipal Administrator; Patrick Hitchens, Acting Municipal Solicitor; Michael Trail, Norristown Police Chief; Jayne Musonye, Director of Planning and Municipal Development; Kathy Pfister, Director of Finance; Keith Gordon, Code Enforcement Manager; Fire Chief Thomas O'Donnell.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson**, to approve the Minutes from the February 3, 2026 Council Meeting. **The motion passed unanimously.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT

Council President Bates announced that Council met in Executive Session prior to tonight's Council Meeting to discuss personnel and litigation issues. It was also noted that Council met in Executive Session on February 4th, 5th and 9th to discuss personnel issues.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

From Council Vice President Queenan:

He announced that Lucy is in the back to provide headphones for Spanish translation.

"2nd Annual Cupcakes with Councilman Queenan" on Monday, February 23rd at the Norristown Library, 1700 Markley Street, Suite 116.

Councilman McCoy announced the "2nd Annual Black-Owned Business Expo" on Sunday, February 22nd from 3 to 7 pm at the George Washington Carver Center.

Councilwoman Robinson said the "XOXO Montco's Variety Show" at the Theatre Horizon highlights Community members. She told the residents to reach out to her if there is an issue getting tickets.

Councilman McMahon said his next "Town Hall" is to be determined. He said it is a continuing series held on the first Thursday after the first Council meeting.

Councilwoman Griffen thanked those who attended her first Town Hall. She said there was a lot of information shared including Committee vacancies. She said questions can be addressed through Council or Mr. Lightner. She thanked the Council members who attended and Chief Trail, Administration and the Fire Department for their assistance and information, Planning for explaining the Economic Development Plan as well as the Vance Center, 214-216 Cherry Street, that provide Podcasts, drone certification, art and photography on Mondays from 5-7 pm.

Councilwoman Colson extended her condolences to the Scott/West family for the loss of their loved one, Larry West.

RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS FROM THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING

Leonard Lightner said there were no questions to respond to.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Derek Johns, 622 Swede Street, Norristown - He said the Vance Center is bringing kids together. He said the Drone Certification and the recreational things are great but asked how to make it better?

Taria Mayo, 648 West Lafayette Street, Norristown – She thanked Police Chief Trail for the town hall regarding the recent incident at Airy & Stanbridge Streets. She said some people felt they didn't get a chance to speak. She told President Bate he shouldn't have shut people off. She said they can't express themselves in one minute. She thanked Councilwoman Robinson for the show. She said that Planning was awesome. She complimented Councilwoman Colson for a wonderful Town Hall. She said the Vance Center is growing via social media. She said that Mr. Vance's son has art studio there and there is photography, a podcast and music lessons as well as other activities. She added it is for young people up to 20 years old and there is also an opportunity to be certified as a Private Eye through Mr. Vance.

Council Vice President Queenan thanked Chief Trail, the Community and Council. He said he appreciates the feedback and he appreciates Mr. Vance. He said Council is making a concerted effort to bridge the gap between Council and the Community.

MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION

Acting Municipal Solicitor, Patrick Hitchens, noted that all 3 properties listed below were purchased collectively but there will be individual Motions for the separate Assessments. He noted that the School District signed off on it.

Motion to approve the settlement for the Pending Tax Assessment Appeal for 409 West Marshall Street

There was a motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson, to approve the settlement for the pending Tax

Assessment Appeal for 409 West Marshall Street. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Motion to approve the settlement for the Pending Tax Assessment Appeal for 413 West Marshall Street

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson**, to approve the settlement for the pending Tax Assessment Appeal for 413 West Marshall Street. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Motion to approve the settlement for the Pending Tax Assessment Appeal for 417 West Marshall Street

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson**, to approve the settlement for the pending Tax Assessment Appeal for 417 West Marshall Street. **The motion passed unanimously.**

POLICE

Resolution 26-15: Request for Municipal Council approval to promote a Corporal to Sergeant

Chief Trail explained that due to some personnel changes and a recent Retirement, there is a vacancy within the Patrol Unit. He noted that they referred to the list of eligible candidates and picked Michael Wiley. He said it is a Budgeted position.

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson**, to approve Resolution 26-15 to promote Corporal Wiley to Sergeant. **The motion passed unanimously.**

PLANNING & MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT

Ordinance 26-01: Requesting authorization to advertise Ordinance 26-01 for Amusement Device Amendment

Director Musonye provided a history. She said the Devices are allowed in the Zoning District. She noted that Ordinance 23-06 was adopted by a former Council for Skill Games. She said there was an increase in the number of Amusement Devices so they need to contain the Use by being more restrictive and allow them only in the Commercial Retail District as Accessory Uses. She noted that Council met with Staff and the Solicitor and came up with this Ordinance. She said that the Police are interested due to having to address issues such as hanging out in stores. Patrick Hitchens noted this is regard to it being a Primary Use for 4 or more Devices - Accessory Use is for less than 4. Solicitor Hitchens said this is not meant to be prohibiting but it must be done in a legal way.

Ms. Musonye explained some of the Provisions - e.g. require 1,000 foot separation from schools, childcare facilities, parks, churches, religious organizations, hospitals and similar child-oriented uses. She noted that Zoning will measure to verify the separation distance.

Councilwoman Griffen and Councilman McCoy asked what happens if the store is open later than the gaming cut-off time and Ms. Musonye said they must stop using the Device. She said that Zoning Enforcement Officers can issue citations.

The Solicitor said there is concern of having a mini-casino.

There was **a motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson**, to advertise Ordinance 26-01 to amend Chapter 320 (Zoning) of the Municipality of Norristown's General Laws to further regulate amusement devices and arcade uses within the Municipality. The proposed amendments eliminate amusement devices and/or arcades as permitted Primary Use in several Zoning Districts and allow such uses in the Commercial Retail (CR) District only by Conditional Use, subject to specific locational and operational standards. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Ordinance 26-02: Requesting authorization to advertise Ordinance 26-02 for Window Signage Amendment

Director Musonye said that some signage is out of hand and has become a safety issue. She noted that some violate the current Zoning Ordinance. She said that the businesses need to be educated.

Solicitor Hitchens noted that an Ordinance needs to be drafted to address the visual obstructions that are not permitted within 5 feet of the storefront window.

There was a Power Point by Stivens Shehu, Junior Planner. He presented copies of the presentation to Council. The presentation highlighted the Law and the limits and requirements for sign usage. It also showed “Compliant” vs. “Non-Compliant” examples. There was also information about what happens when this Law is violated, including fines.

The Solicitor explained that violation is Civil not Criminal.

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson**, to advertise Ordinance 26-02 to amend Chapter 320 (Zoning), Article XXVII (Signs) of the Municipality of Norristown’s General Laws to regulate visual obstructions in storefront windows and glass doors. The proposed amendment establishes new standards that classify merchandise, shelving, fixtures and similar physical items located within a specified distance of first-floor glass areas as window signage for regulatory purposes. This amendment is intended to improve visibility into commercial spaces, support public safety objectives, and ensure consistency with the Municipality’s Comprehensive Plan. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Resolution 26-12: Recommend award of contract to AMO Environmental Decisions, Inc. in the amount of \$469,000 to provide environmental professional services to implement the Municipality of Norristown’s United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) Community-Wide Brownfield Assessment Grant Project

Director Musonye explained that it has been a hindrance to for properties to be developed due to the cost of dealing with contaminants on Brownfield sites. She noted that the Government made EPA Funds as Grants for those property owners. It involves hiring a Consultant to deal with Phase 1 which would make the property more viable. She named some local businesses who have gone

through this process. She noted that this lets the Developer know what they're dealing with. She added that going through this service opens up the probability of getting Grants because it removes the obstacles.

She noted that Planning received a \$500,000 Award in September 2025 and an RFP was sent out. She explained that the RFP is for identifying, having an inventory, categorize and rank for the selected Brownfield sites within Norristown. She said this process is used to develop liability management and allows for safe and viable monitoring and the Consultant needs to be an expert in this field.

She said the RFP was advertised in the Times Herald, sent out on PennBid and sent to 60 consultants nationwide. She said she received 17 questions and received 11 proposals. The deadline was October 27, 2025.

There was a Power Point highlighting "Firms responding to RFP" in Price Order and Rank Order. She said they decided on AMO Environmental Decisions, Inc. for \$469,000.00 and noted they have prior experience in Norristown.

Director Musonye asked Council to approve.

There were some Council questions that Ms. Musonye responded to noting there are 20 Phase 1 and 10 Phase 2 Brownfield sites. She noted that the point-scoring process measures experience and references, etc. She said that sites are chosen based on studies and assessments.

There was **a motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson**, to award a contract to AMO Environmental Decisions in the amount of \$469,000 to provide environmental professional services to implement the Municipality of Norristown's US EPA Community-Wide Brownfield Assessment Grant Project, in compliance with Section 7-713 of the Home Rule Charter and Section 4-35(A)(6) of the Administrative Code which states, "All contracts in excess of \$24,500 shall be in writing and shall be awarded by Municipal Council and the contract shall be executed by the Municipal Administrator." **The motion passed unanimously.**

Ordinance 26-03: Requesting authorization to advertise Ordinance 26-03 for Smoke and Vape Shops Amendment

Jayne Musonye noted there has been “pushback” with this issue because there are too many of these shops. She said there was a conversation with Council and this needs to be streamlined. She said their Use in the Commercial Retail District could be amended and Council would decide where they are allowed.

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilman McCoy**, to advertise Ordinance 26-03 to amend Chapter 320 (Zoning) of the Municipality of Norristown’s General Laws to create and define a “Significant Tobacco Retailer” Use and to establish standards governing smoke shops, vape shops, hookah bars, and similar Uses within the Municipality. The proposed amendments revise the Zoning definitions and permit Significant Tobacco Retailers in the Commercial Retail (CR) District by Conditional Use only, subject to locational, operational and safety-related requirements. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Resolution 26-13: Recommend Award of Contract to Merje in the amount of \$69,810 to develop a Comprehensive Wayfinding Signage and Gateway Improvements Master Plan and Implementation Study

Ms. Musonye noted this was discussed during the Budget season. She said that the last time for this plan was in 2004. She said it was time to get a plan in place. She said they received 7 proposals. She showed on the Power Point the “Firms Responding to RFPs”. She said they decided on “Found Design LLC” doing business as “Merje.” She noted they are in 200 cities and came in with a great price.

Ms. Musonye said she will bring progress reports before Council.

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson**, to award a contract to Merje in the amount of \$69,810 to provide Professional Services to implement the Municipality of Norristown’s Wayfinding Signage and Gateway Improvements Master Plan and Implementation Study in compliance with Section 7-713 of the Home Rule Charter and Section 4-35(A)(6) of the Administrative Code which states, “All contracts in excess of

\$24,500 shall be in writing and shall be awarded by Municipal Council and the contract shall be executed by the Municipal Administrator.” **The motion passed unanimously.**

Resolution 26-14: Recommend Award of Contract to Simone Collins Landscape Architecture in the amount of \$96,200 to provide Professional Services to implement the Municipality of Norristown’s Parks Master Plan

Ms. Musonye noted that the company that was selected, following the RFP process, is Simone Collins Landscape Architecture in the amount of \$96,200.

There was **a motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson**, to award a contract to Simone Collins Landscape Architecture in the amount of \$96,200 to provide professional services to implement the Municipality of Norristown’s Parks Master Plan in compliance with Section 7-713 of the Home Rule Charter and Section 4-35(A)(6) of the Administrative Code which states, “All contracts in excess of \$24,500 shall be in writing and shall be awarded by Municipal Council and the contract shall be executed by the Municipal Administrator.” **The motion passed unanimously.**

ADJOURNMENT

There was **a motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Colson**, to adjourn the Council Work Session. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo
Clerk of Council